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Drug plan unrealistic *Politicians should face all sides of war*

When President George Bush announced his proposal for a \$7.9 billion war on narcotics, he called drugs the "gravest domestic threat facing our nation."

He asked for tougher penalties on users, more money for prisons, treatment programs and education.

He told the nation, from his posh Oval Office, that every American should refuse to turn their backs on drug abuse.

Swell.

Bush's newest attack on the "war on drugs" is well planned, but just because it is more expensive and more elaborate than previous plans doesn't mean it is any more realistic.

Ronald Reagan declared an all-out war on drugs, too. Now a lot of kids know how to "just say no" to substances they've never seen, and millions of Americans know what their brains look like on drugs. But can anyone prove that it is any less profitable to sell drugs today than it was during Reagan's regime?

Presidents can promise a drug-free America until they're blue in the face, but until their constituents are ready to quit supplying the demand it won't work.

Bush and his aides would have done better to ask themselves whether or not the so-called "war on drugs" is really a winnable war at all.

Politicians must realize that people will do drugs no matter how strict the penalties are. People will sell drugs even if it means a jail sentence. Selling drugs is a profitable business, and in a country where people thrive on money, it is a difficult business to turn down -- especially when the alternative is making minimum wage.

The police departments in this country don't have the manpower to track down all arenas of the drug market. The money involved is powerful, and can buy its way out of a lot of court cases.

People are afraid of the power and the viciousness of people involved in buying and selling drugs. When their families' lives are at stake, standing up to a person high on crack does not seem such a wise idea, even if the president thinks it could make a difference in the nation's future.

The enemy in this war has a thousand faces, and unless politicians can stand up to every one of those faces, they will lose the war.

-- Lee Rood and Amy Edwards
for the Daily Nebraskan



Present chaos sure to worsen *Omaha, Lincoln campuses feud while Massengale ponders action*

Just when I thought we'd never find out why Ronald Roskens got fired, the University of Nebraska at Omaha's student newspaper, Gateway, solved the whole mystery.

"We know why the Board of Regents removed NU President Ronald Roskens from office, and why they're being so silent about it," the paper declared with supreme confidence. "The regents are planning to tear down central administration. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln will be the heir apparent... And regardless of who (the next NU President) is, he or she will have the support of the Husker-crazed, flag-ship-frenzied, party-school faction, and accept the crown from the joyous regents."

Try again, folks.

Yes, the University of Nebraska probably will see some serious changes in the coming year. But nobody knows exactly what these changes will be.

Like the Russians after Joseph Stalin, the university after Ronald Roskens is embroiled in some major chaos, and a power struggle to boot. And all bets are off as to how it all will work out.

To get a sense of how this all started, one needs to understand how the Board of Regents changed politically in this past year. Until very recently, Roskens had a solid majority of support on the board and was allowed a great deal of latitude in making university policy.

Then things changed.

In November 1988, Robert Allen and Rosemary Skrupa defeated Regents Robert Koefoot and James Moylan, two long-time supporters of Roskens and central administration. These elections, along with the 1986 defeat of Robert Simmons by Don Blank, decimated the solid pro-Roskens majority on the board.

Thus the stage was set for a growing disillusionment on the part of the regents with respect to Roskens, particularly as the newer regents sought to reassert the role of the board as the maker of policy.

One of the first major battles between Roskens and board members came in 1988 when the board narrowly rejected a central administration plan to buy a \$5 million IBM computer, dividing between the newer regents and the long-time

Roskens supporters.

Regents were put off by specific instances in which Roskens was seen as making policy, rather than implementing directives of the board. According to the Omaha World-Herald, Blank felt that Roskens lied to him when the Nebraska Legislature voted to close the technical agriculture campus at Curtis.

Regent Donald Fricke was said to feel that Roskens, a former UNO chancellor with strong ties to the Omaha business elite, did not give enough support to the Lincoln campus.



Brian Svoboda

And Regent Nancy Hoch was said to have been left twisting in the wind by Roskens while testifying before the Legislature's Appropriations Committee on the Fall 1988 computer decision.

The proposed merger of Kearney State College with the university system fueled the fires started by these incidents. Reports surfaced that Roskens did not faithfully implement the regents' position on the merger, working behind the scenes to promote Kearney State's inclusion.

And so, in June 1989, the regents' executive subcommittee began its annual review of Roskens' performance, and the decision was secretly made to begin negotiations toward Roskens' early retirement.

By this time, a solid majority of the board -- Hoch, Margaret Robinson, Allen, Fricke and Blank -- appeared ready to vote for Roskens' removal. Omaha regents Skrupa and Hansen presumably counted the votes and went along -- probably because of the board's apparent long-held belief in decision-making by consensus, possibly because they were afraid of antagonizing colleagues toward future policy proposals such as the addition of doctorate programs on the UNO campus.

After the July regents' meeting failed to produce a settlement between the regents and Roskens, the regents called the now-infamous July

31 emergency meeting that resulted in Roskens' firing and UNL chancellor Martin Massengale's promotion to interim NU president.

Now, in the aftermath of Roskens' firing, the regents and the university community find themselves embroiled in two levels of high-stakes political combat.

The first level is external. The regents desperately need to repair their relationships with the Legislature and the general public. This will be extremely difficult. The regents' silence on their reasons for firing Roskens has presented an easy cause for legislators and citizens to rally around.

The second level is internal. The great divide between the Lincoln and Omaha campuses threatens to widen even farther. The current push by UNO administrators and the Omaha regents for the addition of doctoral degrees at UNO (UNL currently is the only campus offering doctoral degrees) is an implicit challenge to Massengale as UNL chancellor and system president.

At first glance, Massengale is in a no-win situation. If he supports the UNO doctoral program, he accepts a policy which many see as a threat to the UNL campus. If he opposes the proposal, he reinforces the fear held by many Omahans that Massengale would favor UNL as system president.

So now the political terrain in the university system looks like a minefield. The regents may have wrested control of the university empire back from their president, but now they are under assault from the outside.

Meanwhile, the Omaha and Lincoln campuses are busy fighting for turf, while Massengale is caught in the crossfire as interim president.

With a comprehensive study of the state's higher education system in the works, state senators talking about appointing the regents and the 1990 legislative session and elections waiting in the wings, the best may be yet to come.

Stay tuned.

Svoboda is a senior political science and Russian major, and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

Do not suppress free thought

Dear Mr. Silly Sophomore (DN, Sept. 6): Just like Jesse Helms, I see you have too much time on your hands. Comparing the NEA to Def Leppard is one of the most ignorant statements I've heard of. You've obviously watched too many Jim Bakker ravings on TV. I trust that you are right now denouncing him. Good. The NEA is and has denounced frauds like Hustler and Penthouse. Observe the contrasts and understand

that art (if you know what that is) does not take religious bias into every art gallery in the United States. If you and all religious maniacs are upset about the NEA, then start your own religiously-biased art galleries. Don't put chains on free thought. That is what Hitler did.

Aaron Eckelbecker
art
sophomore

Reader asks for tolerance, acceptance

At long last -- someone at ASUN is taking notice of the homophobia that's plaguing our campus. What's more encouraging is that he has the courage to do something about it. Thanks Bryan Hill -- we need that voice and that commitment.

This summer I attended a workshop/camp for gays and lesbians. For the first time in my life, I was a minority in my sexual orientation. Being one of the two straight women in that workshop, the thing that impressed me most was that I

wasn't ridiculed or condemned for my sexual orientation. I found, instead, tolerance, acceptance and appreciation of my sexuality among my homosexual friends. Is it then too much to ask that we heterosexuals show the same tolerance, acceptance and appreciation of gays and lesbians? After all -- we are living in the land of the free, aren't we?

Sim Boey
graduate student
English education